

NEW MOBILITIES IN ASIA



Edited by Tim Simpson

# Tourist Utopias

Offshore Islands, Enclave Spaces,  
and Mobile Imaginaries

Amsterdam  
University  
Press

## Tourist Utopias

# New Mobilities in Asia

In the 21st century, human mobility will increasingly have an Asian face. Migration from, to, and within Asia is not new, but it is undergoing profound transformations. Unskilled labour migration from the Philippines, China, India, Burma, Indonesia, and Central Asia to the West, the Gulf, Russia, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand continues apace. Yet industrialization in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and India, the opening of Burma, and urbanization in China is creating massive new flows of internal migration. China is fast becoming a magnet for international migration from Asia and beyond.

Meanwhile, Asian students top study-abroad charts; Chinese and Indian managers and technicians are becoming a new mobile global elite as foreign investment from those countries grows; and Asian tourists are fast becoming the biggest travellers and the biggest spenders, both in their own countries and abroad.

These new mobilities reflect deep-going transformations of Asian societies and their relationship to the world, impacting national identities and creating new migration policy regimes, modes of transnational politics, consumption practices, and ideas of modernity. The series will, for the first time, bring together studies by historians, anthropologists, geographers, and political scientists that systematically explore these changes.

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Tim Simpson*

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Imperial Palace Hotel, Macau  
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## Prolegomenon



# 1 Mapping Tourist Utopias

*Tim Simpson*

*Vacations remain one of the few manageable utopias in our lives.*

– Orvar Löfgren (1999: 7)

Orvar Löfgren's characterization of vacations as 'manageable utopias' appears in his social history of tourism, in which he explores the emergence, beginning in the eighteenth century, of the peculiar tourist subject who has come to occupy such a central place in contemporary society and culture. Löfgren cautions that the attitudes, behaviors, and objectives typical of tourism today should not be taken for granted; rather, he argues that modern individuals had to self-consciously *learn how to be tourists*. This pedagogical process was a product of their practical experiments and engagements with potential tourist sites and recreational behaviors.

The first such excursionists were men of leisure, for whom tourism was a serious intellectual and aesthetic pursuit: for them, the natural world revealed itself as a potent array of sublime sensations and picturesque, transformative experiences, at least for those who knew how to discover and appreciate those sights. By the nineteenth century, however, a general consensus had emerged that the pursuit of leisure should not be restricted by social class, but rather should serve as a universally available counterpart to, and compensation for, labor. As a result, tourist sites and their accompanying infrastructures reproduced exponentially. Compared with the increasingly arduous and alienating world of industrial work, the solitary visit to the Alps or Catskills, or the annual family trip to a Mediterranean beach or urban amusement park, had a palpable Arcadian quality which set it apart and constituted an escape from the daily grind.

These efforts engendered and eventually naturalized what we might call a touristic subjectivity, predicated upon what Löfgren calls the 'mindscape of modern tourism' (73). Today this mindscape has evolved into a fully-realized global *tourist imaginary*, which has itself recently become an object of study in the social sciences (Appadurai 1996; Crouch et al. 2005; Inglis 2000; Lean et al. 2015; Salazar 2010, 2012; Salazar and Graburn 2014b).

This book takes seriously Löfgren's playful suggestion that tourism has a utopian quality. However, the contributors look beyond specific tourists or their individual vacation practices in order to explore the *spatial production* of contemporary spectacular tourist sites. I have chosen to call these places

*tourist utopias* for reasons that will be explained and developed here, and in more detail in the chapters that follow. The goal is to analyze the manner in which this utopian quality of travel, which first appeared in an industrial era, is intensified and commodified under a global post-industrial regime which has transformed the nature of labor, the temporality of work and leisure, and the very form of capital itself.

## Asian Tourist Mobilities

*Mobilities has become a new code word for grasping the global.*

– Aihwa Ong (2006: 121)

These changes are particularly evident across Asia, which is the site of spectacular tourism development today, and the contributors to this book share a general focus on the region and its perimeter environs: from Byzantium to Oceania, Disney to Hollywood. Indeed, the aim is not to contain ‘the ambiguous nomenclature, “Asia”’ (Roy 2011: 309), but to draw inspiration from the region’s kinetic dynamism and aspirations. As we will see, the fecund varieties of developmental, and post-developmental, state capitalism found across the continent today are unleashing an increasingly affluent and mobile population, with planetary reverberations. These new flows of Asian subjects and capital, coupled with the enhanced expectations engendered by emerging consumer desires, are transforming tourist sites as far afield as Eastern and Western Europe, the post-Soviet states, and Australasia. In the People’s Republic of China alone, domestic rural-to-urban migration constitutes the largest movement of people in human history (Walker and Buck 2007). But even that exodus is being surpassed by the cross-border tourism of tens of millions of post-socialist Chinese citizens anxious to make up for a half century of scarcity and isolation. Their nascent travels animate the tourist imaginary and drive the global tourism industry today.

The tourist locales explored in this book range from gritty Chinese-financed ‘instant cities’ emerging in special economic zones carved from the jungles of Laos, to Singapore’s glittering waterfront Marina Bay total tourism environment; from Macau’s Venetian- and Parisian-themed casino mega-resorts, to Abu Dhabi’s ‘island of happiness’, the site of a new Guggenheim Museum and Arabian Louvre; from Walt Disney’s experimental themed utopian urban prototype, to Bulgarian-designed video game sites that deploy motifs mined from the post-socialist urban landscape; from the

sublime natural site of Aotearoa New Zealand, the rural setting for Middle-earth in the blockbuster *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, to the profane fabrications of Dubai's Palm Jumeirah island. These sites offer a wide range of attractions: fine art exhibitions and wild-game dining, pristine enclosed tropical gardens and cigarette smoke-encircled baccarat tables, state-of-the-art Ferris wheels and old-fashioned sex tourism.

The proliferation of such sites is no accident or arbitrary development. Though they share characteristics common to the touristic landscapes formed over the preceding two centuries, they are in other ways definitive products of our contemporary regime. These sites serve inadvertently as laboratories for experimental forms of governance, innovations in architecture and design, and the production of post-Fordist modes of subjectivity. While they certainly reproduce the inequities of global capitalism, they also harbor a palpable utopian affectation, which motivates the contributions that constitute this book.

## Why Utopia?

*The premise here is then that the most noxious phenomena can serve as the repository and hiding place for all kinds of unsuspected wish-fulfillments and Utopian gratifications.*

– Fredric Jameson (2009: 415-416)

Sir Thomas More's classic work *Utopia*, celebrating its 500-year anniversary in 2016, inaugurated a formative genre of literary and philosophical imagination, as well as inadvertently emboldening a variety of visionary political schemes that have aimed to construct perfect worlds. While the title of this volume indicates that *Utopia* is one important inspiration for this work, even a cursory review of the chapters herein should reveal that this book is not really concerned with Utopias per se, at least not those that deserve a capital 'U'.

Indeed, the sites analyzed in this volume might easily be dismissed as *dystopian* 'evil paradises' (Davis and Monk 2007) for the manner in which vast resources are deployed to benefit a few at the expense of many others, with often devastating social and environmental consequences. Billions of dollars have been squandered to construct Ibn Battuta-themed shopping malls, five-star Armani hotels, verdant desert golf courses, and exquisitely baroque casino resorts. Hidden beneath these gilded facades lie the ugly realities of resource deprivation, labor exploitation, and cultural and economic dispossession, all of which belie their utopian status.



Asia was the site of some of the twentieth century's boldest utopian experiments. As a political telos, however, utopia has lost its luster. From the fanaticism of the Cultural Revolution, to the genocidal legacy of the Khmer Rouge, there are sufficient human tragedies to convince of the practical futility of utopian schemes. Forsaken utopian ruins continue to crumble around us, evidenced by the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc, the apostasy of China's 'market socialism', and the ongoing radical transformations of peripheral communist states such as Laos and Vietnam. These developments seemingly announce the abandonment of the grand (leftist) utopian ambitions that animated the twentieth century: they have been replaced by the doxa of neoliberal ideology, which places our collective future in the precarious grasp of atomistic enterprising individuals and the 'invisible hand' of the unregulated market. In this increasingly Darwinian social world the tourist holiday may indeed be the only remaining 'manageable utopia'.

## Utopic Practice

*Distinguishing between utopia and utopic practice is the only way to arrive at a theory of utopia.*

– Louis Marin (1984: 196)

None of the contributors to this book claim to have discovered a pristine secluded beach, an uncharted desert island, or a secretive Shangri-La. But this volume joins a robust conversation that attempts to rescue some value from what might otherwise seem to be a thoroughly discredited concept (Gordin et al. 2010; Jacobsen and Tester 2012; Jameson 2005, 2009; Levitas 2013; Pinder 2005, 2013; Sargisson 2012; Tally 2013). What unites the contributors to this book is not so much their focus on realizable utopias, but rather an interest in *utopic spatial play*.

Fredric Jameson, arguably the most prolific and influential contemporary voice of utopianism, poses utopia as a critical *method* rather than a mode of representation, 'an operation calculated to disclose the limits of our own imagination of the future' (Jameson 2009: 413). From this perspective, the shared interest in this volume is in the spatial play of utopia that animates the contemporary tourist spectacle, a process that Louis Marin (1984) refers to as *utopics*. Marin's imaginative deconstructive reading of More's text focuses on his understanding of utopia as a 'poetic object' (102), or 'discursive organization of space' (113), rather than an actual

place. His analysis is grounded in the discursive contradiction that More created with the clever play on Greek words that forms the title of his work. A conflation of both *eu-topia* and *ou-topia*, utopia is simultaneously both a *good place* and a *non-place*. Marin refers to this conceptual *difference* as the 'neutral'.

While More's satirical work functions as a social critique, Marin characterizes it as a paradoxical 'ideological critique of ideology' (195), primarily because of its self-contained mode of literary production and lack of methodological transparency; that is, '[i]t does not produce the theory of its own production' (196). For Marin, the importance of More's book is not that it articulates a theory of utopia, or some program by which one might be realized; rather, as a discursive event it created the very conditions of possibility for *utopics*, or the 'spatial play on the theme of utopia' (Hetherington 1997: 11). It is this utopic spatial play, and not some overarching utopian program, which enlivens the production of the tourist sites explored in this book. These tourist utopias reveal both the unconscious social desires that are materialized in these spaces, as well as our spectacular failure to bring about their realization.

## Heterotopia

*The spatiality of modernity, related to its processes of social ordering, often involves the idea of utopia but not the creation of utopias in themselves.*

– Kevin Hetherington (1997: 56)

As sites of utopic spatial play, the tourist destinations studied herein share some characteristics with those spaces that Michel Foucault (1986) referred to as *heterotopia*. Unlike utopias, or 'sites with no real place' (24), heterotopia are actually-existing spatial 'counter-sites', such as the carnival, brothel, or Persian garden, in which 'all the other sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted' (24). In his inchoate 'heterotopology', Foucault recounts the characteristics of heterotopic spaces. First, heterotopia are a universal product of all cultural traditions, but they take a diverse variety of forms. Second, each society creates heterotopia that serve some specific function necessary for the maintenance of social order. Third, a defining characteristic of heterotopia is their plurality, the capability they have 'of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites which are in themselves incompatible'. Fourth, Foucault suggests that heterotopia have distinct temporalities, or

*heterochronia*; some, such as the library or museum, are characterized by excessive accumulations of time, while others are defined by the fleeting and transitory moment of the festival. Fifth, Foucault notes that all types of heterotopia, even those as apparently distinct as the cemetery or the Scandinavian spa, are marked by some form of enclosure which distinguishes the site from the spaces of everyday life, with rituals of passage which serve to preserve this boundary. The final principle of heterotopia regards their function in relation to ordinary social spaces. For Foucault their role is either 'to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space' of human life 'as still more illusory'; or contrarily, 'to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well-arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled' (27).

Among the many scholars who have taken up this object of study, Kevin Hetherington (1997) has called attention to the specific relationships among Marin's *utopics* and Foucault's *heterotopia*. Hetherington locates heterotopia in precisely the 'neutral' tension Marin observed between More's good place and non-place. In his social history of some heterotopian 'badlands of modernity', Hetherington contends that nineteenth-century European sites such as the Palais Royale, the Masonic lodge, and the British factory may be understood as 'sites in which new ways of experimenting with ordering society are tried out' (Hetherington 1997: 12). For example, the Parisian Palais Royale was a spatial counter-site that combined a variety of distinct places, including public gardens, cafés, theaters, and shopping arcades. These articulated spaces functioned as a point of convergence for the activities of a diverse group of aristocrats, intellectuals, libertines, pamphleteers, revolutionaries, prostitutes, sightseers, and consumers, people who otherwise would not have found themselves gathered together in the same locale. As such, the Palais Royale clearly exemplifies Foucault's observation that '[t]he heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single place several spaces, several sites that are themselves incompatible' (25). The Palais Royale was no utopia, but it was a site of *utopic social ordering* in which individuals could experiment with identity and sociality.

For Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (2008), who have compiled what is perhaps the most comprehensive account of present-day heterotopia, the contemporary network society has normalized these spaces such that they no longer resemble the non-routine, exceptional spaces described by Foucault or Hetherington (see also Palladino and Miller 2015). They contend that a broad assortment of heterotopian spaces now constitute the confines and contexts of our daily lives. Theme park streets, cinematic shopping mall

motifs,<sup>1</sup> a New Jersey gated neighborhood, a master-planned retirement community in Florida, Singaporean condominiums, Tel Aviv's beach, French 'new towns', a revitalized London suburb, architectures of flow, Jakarta's urban core, Dubai's reclaimed islands, and liminal urban 'dead zones' all fall within their inclusive heterotopian rubric. While these are intriguing examples, the tendency to see ubiquitous heterotopian qualities in every social space risks exhausting the usefulness of the concept and undermining its quite potent critical value.

## Experimental Laboratories

*Heterotopia are sites associated with alternate modes of social ordering that are expressions of a utopic spatial play. [...] Almost like laboratories, they can be taken as the sites in which new ways of experimenting with ordering are tried out.*

– Kevin Hetherington (1997: 12)

Understood as a site of utopic spatial play, the heterotopia provides a useful model with which to conceptualize some characteristics of the tourist spaces explored in this volume. Indeed, Foucault's own examples of this phenomenon appear almost like a pre-history or genealogy of the contemporary tourist enclave: the garden, museum, fairgrounds, honeymoon, motel, brothel, ship, and colony. One clearly useful heterotopian quality for understanding tourist utopias involves their experimental function. The heterotopia as social laboratory is strikingly evident in Peter Lamborn Wilson's (2003) unconventional history of the sixteenth-century 'pirate utopia' of the African Republic of Salé. For Wilson, Salé not only served as a bacchanalian respite for a diverse group of Muslim corsairs and *renegadoes*, but also constituted a radical social experiment, with a proto-democratic system of governance that Wilson contends was a precursor to both the British Commonwealth and the American and French republics.

The pirate utopia may be understood as a heterotopian counter-site that exemplifies what Wilson would refer to in his later work (published under the name Hakim Bey) as a *temporary autonomous zone*, an experimental, non-hierarchical social space existing outside of formal networks of discipline and control. Of course the tourist sites discussed here are

<sup>1</sup> We can think of Woody Allen's *Scenes from a Mall* or of George A. Romero's *Dawn of the Dead*, in which an assortment of holdouts battle suburban zombies by barricading themselves inside a mall.

not homologous with Salé, or with the Palais Royale for that matter. But these locales do rehearse emergent forms of sovereignty, governance, labor, and sociality. This observation locates these sites within the pedagogical dimension of leisure and the manner in which tourism functions as a sort of ‘cultural laboratory’ (Löfgren 1999: 7).

For example, in an intriguing analysis that conflates heterotopian spatial play with the tourist locale, Rem Koolhaas (1994) contends that the turn-of-the-century leisure site of Coney Island served as a ‘laboratory’ (49) to test themes and design motifs that would later be implemented in the borough of Manhattan, which itself became the paradigmatic twentieth-century city. Coney Island was a testing ground for all the elements of the modern metropolis. ‘Enclosure’ of various amusements and attractions on Coney Island created a thematic ‘park-enclave’ model that was repeated across the island and became the toolkit for the city. Here developers constructed prototype skyscraper towers, successfully managed the challenging density of an urban population, electrified and illuminated the night, foregrounded the role of the geometrical city block as primary urban actor, and enabled the more general ‘institutionalization of misbehavior’ (Koolhaas 1994: 49) that would become New York’s trademark. Coney Island unwittingly ‘defines completely new relationships between *site, program, form, and technology*’, says Koolhaas (1994: 62), which ultimately served as a blueprint for Manhattan.

Much like Salé or Coney Island, the tourist sites explored in this book may be understood as laboratories for testing novel spatial formats, protocols, flows, mobilities, and subjectivities which may then be adopted and implemented elsewhere (see Easterling, this volume). While Disney’s utopic EPCOT is clearly a paradigm for the ‘learning cities’ that Angela Ndalians explores in her chapter, for example, the ‘degenerate utopia’ (Marin 1984) of Disneyland itself also inspires the themed cityscapes of Las Vegas, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Macau. Dubai’s ‘instant city’ (Bagaeen 2007) growth strategy, in turn, animates the spatial production of far-removed Laotian special economic zones; and Macau’s remarkably lucrative post-colonial casino gaming-led development has motivated other Southeast Asian states, including Laos and Singapore, to experiment with aleatory economies. Finally, with its technocratic governance and Garden City urbanism, Singapore – which was dismissed by even Koolhaas (1998b) two decades ago as a ‘Potemkin metropolis’ – is today a model emulated by aspirational developing states around the world (Chua 2011); with the recent legalization of casino gambling, Singapore has become the apotheosis of a tourist state (see Goh, this volume). Therefore, the *pirate utopia* as laboratory of liberal governance informs the *tourist utopia* as testing room of design innovations and novel political programs.

## Crisis Capitalism

*Utopic discourse makes its appearance only when a mode of capitalist production is formed.*

– Louis Marin (1984: 198)

For Marin, utopia could only emerge as a discursive object at a precise historical moment, the transition from feudalism to capitalism during which More penned his text. However, Marin notes that '[t]here are probably analogous examples of utopic discourses in formation corresponding to the passage between economic periods in history, especially between various Asian, classical, and feudal modes of production' (199). Marin's temporal periodization is important to understanding the formation of tourist utopias.

There is an emerging consensus today that we are living through another economic transition of world-historical importance. The relatively brief period of stable post-war Fordist affluence the West enjoyed is over. We have entered an increasingly precarious, crisis-prone capitalist condition with numerous consequences for both labor and leisure. With the turn to specialized 'flexible' small-batch craft production, accompanied by the stark economic inequities typified by the rapid ascent of the 1 percent, in many ways it feels like our future may involve a reversion to some strange postmodern feudalism. For Peter Sloterdijk, however, what defines the present era is not so much the emergence of post-Fordist production, but our current location at the termination of the 500-year-long process of 'terrestrial globalization', during which humans circumnavigated, contained, and ultimately mastered the earth as a spherical object of knowledge and contemplation – a *globe* which we came to understand from the outside. That era was inaugurated by the Portuguese navigations and discoveries which, for Sloterdijk, both prompted the imagination of faraway island utopias, and subjected the globe-trotting tourist who might take to the seas in search of them. The era concluded with the post-war Bretton Woods agreement that managed to finally articulate all of the planet's far-flung locales under the sign of the US dollar, the global reserve currency and universal signifier of value.

Although they do not adopt Sloterdijk's terminology, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000, 2009) take up the same narrative, observing a decisive shift in the global economy in the 1970s with the abandonment of Bretton Woods. The decision to delink the dollar from the gold standard destabilized value, prompting a transition from a stable post-war industrial 'planner state' to a post-industrial 'crisis state'. In the planner state accumulation was based on the Fordist organization of labor on a national scale. This system

was stabilized by a Keynesian macroeconomic bargain among the state, corporations, and labor, ensuring a workforce whose members enjoyed high rates of employment, and could therefore serve as a market for the products they produced. These were the workers who dutifully saved a portion of their annual wages in anticipation of a relaxing vacation in Miami or Disneyland.

However, today we encounter a fundamental transformation of capital relations, across a set of interrelated trajectories that stretch from production to consumption, stability to mobility, savings to debt, the 'real' economy to financialization, and long-term planning to reactionary crisis management. 'Crisis, then, becomes the normal condition of capitalist development and rule to the extent that the bilateral processes of economic and juridical organization that provided an organic relationship between labor and capital are abandoned' (Hardt 2005: 11). If the discursive event of More's *Utopia* was only possible at the transition from feudalism to capitalism (and the commencement of Iberian seafaring), the specific form of spatial play indicative of the tourist utopia is enabled by this post-Fordist and post-Keynesian transition that accompanies the resolution of the half millennia project of globalization.

## Spaces of Exception

*Tourism spaces, set apart from the mundane world for the tourists, are in part spaces of the imaginary, of fantasy, and of dreaming.*

– Noel Salazar and Nelson H.H. Graburn (2014a: 17)

One way this political economy is manifested in these new tourist spaces is that each is in some way an autonomous 'space of exception' to normal political or juridical rule, an enclave or 'offshore' space that is distinct from a larger sovereign territory. We may understand the utopic *spatial production of the exception* to be one indicative element of post-Fordism, mirroring the 'state of exception' that Carl Schmitt (2006) contended was exemplary of the practice of twentieth-century sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> These sites reveal 'that intensified processes and patterns of uneven development today are increasingly expressed in enclave spaces' (Sidaway 2007: 332). This condition is

2 At the same time, the discovery of the enclave is in many ways a retrograde reversion to earlier forms of medieval governance. Segmented or disaggregated spaces like the city-state or gated community are reminiscent of medieval sites. 'What persists in the analysis of neo-liberalism', argue Alsayyad and Roy (2006) in an analysis of what they call 'medieval modernity', 'is a sense of newness: of a new mode of production, or a new production of space, of new forms of discipline and control. Our use of the "medieval" is mean to call into question this teleology' (16).



characteristic of any utopian totality: Jameson (2009) notes that all utopias are predicated on some sense of a 'closure or enclave structure' (415), which establishes the limit that separates utopian and non-utopian space.

Aihwa Ong (2006) and Ronan Palan (2003) have highlighted in different ways the importance of such exceptional spaces to the contemporary global economy. For Ong (2006), neoliberal economic policies in Asia can be understood as the deployment of the exception as a post-developmental strategy of governance. South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and China in different ways pursue economic development via 'zoning technologies' that create special zones to entice transnational corporations with tax benefits and an available and flexible labor force, and 'variegated citizenship' that parcels out economic advantages or personal freedoms to select local groups.

Palan (2003), on the other hand, describes the creation of distinct enclaves of financial activity that rely on a dialectical bifurcation between 'onshore' realms, subject to conventional state regulation and taxation, and 'offshore' realms where some degree of those regulations are withheld. Offshore does not describe a literal island locale; it is 'not a territorial space but a juridical innovation', a constructed legal or regulatory fiction that reconfigures conventional territory (Palan 2003: 162). These sites are figuratively 'offshore' in a manner similar to tax havens, free trade zones, duty free shops, and shipping 'flags of convenience'.

The key operation of both 'neoliberalism as exception' and offshore finance is an uneven disaggregation or division of a larger sovereign territory into constituent parts, and selective application of special regulations or liberties to a circumscribed component of that territory. This 'juridical bifurcation' (Palan 2003: 20) of the nation-state is indicative of both approaches: these tourist enclaves have developed as symbolically offshore 'spatio-juridical enclosures' (Palan 2003: 1), spaces of exception to conventional legal regimes, which are distinct from the state order to which they belong.

## Pirate Governance

*Pirates, apostates, traitors, degenerates, heretics – what positive meaning could possibly be expected to emerge from such a dire combination?*

– Peter Lamborn Wilson (2003: 200)

This disaggregation of state spaces into constituent components has consequences for governance. David Harvey (1989) observes that in post-Fordist (and post-Keynesian) cities, the state's role has mutated from manager



of metropolitan social welfare, to an entrepreneurial stance that seeks to drive development and growth. One outcome of this process is the increased promotion of private sector projects. In pursuit of entrepreneurial finance and creative acumen, local officials, in a sort of Faustian bargain, increasingly conspire to share governance with non-state agents. Like other features of contemporary capitalism, this phenomenon is intensified in the development and administration of the tourist enclave. Much like the pirates of old, these non-state (or extra-state, or sometimes even effectively stateless) subjects blur the boundary separating public and private.

Wilson's pirate utopia was an offshore haven for a group of non-state actors who were actually crucial to the origins and development of capitalism in the Mediterranean, serving both sides of the hyphen that separates 'non-state'. Pirates existed along a sliding scale of criminality and legitimacy, from bandit to buccaneer to privateer, sometimes sanctioned by the state in letters of marque, sometimes acting out of individual initiative or anarchist beliefs (Easterling 2005). This pirate shadow governance is a recurrent feature of capitalism's development and expansion. Some historians contend that the Ming emperor's motivation for allowing the Portuguese to occupy Macau in the seventeenth century was due in part to the Portuguese navy's ability to thwart attacks by Japanese pirates who disrupted Chinese trade in the South China Sea; that is, the imperialist Portuguese actually served as privateers sanctioned by the emperor to fight other, unsanctioned pirates. Likewise, the British Royal Navy's operations along the 'Pirate Coast' of the Persian Gulf in the early nineteenth century involved attempts to protect shipments of the East India Company from attacks by raiders whom both the British state and the corporation defined as pirates. These attacks, however, were sponsored by the ruling al-Qawasim family of Sharjah and were motivated by the British refusal to pay toll taxes to pass through the Strait of Hormuz (Onley 2005; see also Walcott 2006). From their perspective, the British sailors were simply freebooters, rather than a legitimate maritime security force.

With such fluctuating and mutating partnerships among the state and its proxy agents, the distinction between the two categories becomes increasingly ambiguous. In tourist enclaves the state often colludes opportunistically with contemporary non-state actors – consultants (Sloterdijk 2013), 'orgmen' (Easterling 2005), entrepreneurs, gangsters, mercenaries, entertainment industry executives (see Werry, this volume) and the like, who sometimes even resemble landlocked pirates in a contemporary guise. For example, Chinese entrepreneurs are busy today developing extraterritorial tourism and gambling concessions in the 'wild west' border areas

of Laos and Cambodia, in which 'orchestrated land management under the guise of international development' constitutes overt efforts of 'social engineering' (Lyttleton and Nyíri 2011: 1243; see Nyíri, this volume). Sheldon Adelson, the billionaire casino boss, ardent Zionist, and would-be American presidential benefactor, lobbies to repeal anti-smoking legislation in the EU, funds infrastructure development in Macau and Singapore, and in the case of Macau even provides a quasi-governance public security function (see Goh; Simpson, this volume).

Soldier of fortune Erik Prince, founder of the Blackwater paramilitary force (now called Reflex Response), provides an 800-strong expatriate security force of Latin American mercenaries in Abu Dhabi (Mazzetti and Hager 2011). Ominously, the force is being trained not only for anti-terrorism operations, but also to control potential unrest in ubiquitous UAE labor camps that are home to foreign workers – and which may rightly be regarded as dystopian spatial inversions of the tourist enclave (see Elsheshtawy, this volume).<sup>3</sup> Individuals such as Adelson and Prince embody Sloterdijk's (2013) characterization of the contemporary 'anarcho-maritime figure' of the pirate as a retrograde neoliberal agent who 'does as he pleases and then, quoting Ayn Rand, proclaims himself a man of the future' (113).

## Post-Civil Environments

*Heterotopia is the counterpart of what an event is in time, an eruption, an apparition, an absolute discontinuity, taking on its heterotopian character at those times when the event in question is made permanent and translated into a specific architecture.*

– Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Caeter (2008: 92)

As a leisure-oriented spatial exception, the tourist enclave is in one way fundamentally different from those enclave and offshore spaces described by Ong and Palan: these scholars have examined exceptional spaces of *production*, but the tourist enclave is an exceptional space of *consumption*.<sup>4</sup> Those consumption activities increasingly occur within constructed

3 For a different valence of the inverted tourist enclave, see Gonzalez's (2013) discussion of the conflation of United States military and tourism interests on bases in Hawaii and the Philippines.

4 'Ong's focus on production also leaves those enclave spaces oriented towards consumption (such as enclaved tourist resorts) largely outside her vision' (Sidaway 2007: 334).

landscapes which may borrow features from the holiday camps, hotels, and Pink Palaces of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that are the subject of Löfgren's analysis, but which in other ways belong precisely to the contemporary economic regime. Like Coney Island, today's tourist enclave is a heterotopian laboratory for testing innovations in architecture and urbanism.

Maria Kaika (2011) has called attention to the manner in which architecture functions as a component of the social imaginary that serves to naturalize a particular economic order. The twentieth-century corporate skyscraper was an iconic element of the modern skyline, a testament not only to overblown industrialist egos but also to their commitment to the social and cultural life of a particular city. Buildings constructed by the Carnegies or Rockefellers not only served as headquarters of business enterprise, but engaged with the surrounding city, functioned in social ritual, enhanced public space, and contributed to civic life (Kaika 2011: 982).

However, the iconic buildings of the tourist enclave, such as the Las Vegas City Center project, or the Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi (see Elsheshtawy, this volume), differ from the iconic buildings of industrial capitalism. These projects are initiated by companies whose actual operations are located elsewhere, funded by transnational elites with no real local commitment, designed by non-resident celebrity 'starchitects', and ultimately lack a distinctive role in the city in which they are located. Kaika imaginatively refers to these contemporary iconic buildings as 'autistic architecture', because they fail to communicate with the city to which they belong. Each is a temporary 'totem for flexible capitalism' (Kaika 2011: 976). Collectively, these structures produce what Cornelius Castoriadis (1998) called a *social imaginary signification* which naturalizes the imposition of a neoliberal regime.

These elements of the built environment mimic the fate of the visitors and foreign workers who are temporarily located in the tourist enclave but do not actually live there. Those transient individuals increasingly find themselves in enclaved and interiorized spaces which are 'formal overtones' (Jameson 1998: 44) of the capital form. Hardt and Negri (2000) contend that 'the capitalist market has always run counter to any division between inside and outside' (190), thriving rather on commerce and interchange. Today we live under the real subsumption of society to capital, a transformation which precludes any vantage point 'outside' the capital relation. In the prophetic words of Hardt and Negri (2000), 'There is no more outside' (186).

This condition of 'no outside' is immediately and intensely experienced in these tourist spaces (see Lampton, this volume). The construction of the typical tourist enclave deploys a grammar of architectural and design elements

with such characteristic features as glass curtain walls, large enclosed atriums, and ubiquitous air conditioning, to produce the effect that the interior 'is the privileged domain for the urban encounter' (Koolhaas 1998a; see also De Cauter 2005). This enclosed interior is a materialization of the post-Fordist condition in the built environment, and is experienced by those tourists who sit under the expansive glass roof of Singapore's indoor tropical garden to enjoy their lattes, navigate indoor Venetian canals inside a Macau resort, or enjoy the Dubai Mall's indoor ski slopes. More importantly, this condition has consequences for civil society, which has historically required public spaces that are autonomous from the demands of the state and market, as well as a clear distinction among the private and public spheres (Douglass 2008). Such distinctions are effectively abolished in the tourist enclave, which in its most extreme form achieves the status of a 'total landscape' (Mitrašinović 2006).

These characteristics attest to the distinctiveness of these enclaves when compared to the heterotopia of earlier eras. For Hetherington, the nineteenth-century Palais Royale functioned, among other things, as a site for an emergent bourgeois public sphere, even proving indispensable to the revolutionary movement that established the French republic. However, it is difficult to envision the revolution that might emerge from, say, Singapore's pristine and disciplined tourist spaces. When privatized governance produces interiorized and encapsulated tourist experiences to serve a transient 'multitude' of mobile tourists and workers, none of whom have any real stake in the locale or commitment to the community, the result is akin to what Jameson calls 'post-civil' society (Jameson and Speaks 1990; see also De Cauter 2005).

## Biopolitical Heterotopias of Crisis Capitalism

*Economic production is going through a period of transition in which increasingly the results of capitalist production are social relations and forms of life. Capitalist production, in other words, is becoming biopolitical.*

– Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2009: 131)

Foucault's insistence on the heterotopia's ahistorical universality means that his heterotopology, unlike Marin's utopics, does not foreground the significance of a political economy. However, reflecting on the current *crisis state* of capitalism, it may be helpful to recall that Foucault identified two specific types of heterotopia: those of *deviation*, such as hospitals and prisons, where societies relegate those individuals considered aberrant; and those of *crisis*, which are spaces for seclusion of the elderly, menstruating women, pubescent

boys, or other individuals undergoing some kind of *biological* transformation. Although Foucault suggests that these latter heterotopia are typical of primitive societies, it may be useful to consider whether our (medieval) post-Fordist tourist enclaves function in part as *biopolitical heterotopia of crisis*, where the most dehumanizing and regrettable elements of crisis capitalism are 'simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted' (Foucault 1986: 24).

Crisis capitalism produces an array of affects that permeate the tourist enclave, itself serving as a synecdoche for an economic logic of intensification whereby financialization extracts profits directly from capital itself, without recourse to production of goods. '[I]n a world that contains no new territory – no new experiences, no new markets', says Nealon (2010), in an analysis of the Las Vegas strip, 'any system that seeks to expand must by definition *intensify* its existing resources, modulate them in some way. This, in a nutshell, is the homology between the cultural logic of globalization and the economic logic of finance capital.' Indeed, in an era of 'casino capitalism' it is not surprising that Macau, Singapore, and Laos have turned to gambling to stimulate economic growth. But even sites where casino gambling is prohibited often encourage and enable highly speculative forms of accumulation that produce a palpable environmental sentiment or intensity. Dubai's debt-financed cityscape of glass office towers and mega-shopping complexes resembles a high-risk game of chance played out on the scale of the built environment; this makes the formerly enduring 'secondary circuit of capital' prone to an inherent instability, with profound consequences for the itinerant workers and tourists who temporarily populate the city (Davis and Monk 2007; Bloch 2010).

However, by assembling the diverse retinue of web designers, translators, English-language instructors, programmers, masseuses, architects, fashion models, Starbucks baristas, data miners, sex workers, medical technicians, hair stylists, Lamborghini salesmen, acrobats, flight attendants, security guards, hipsters, and the panoply of other immaterial and affective laborers necessary to stage a full-fledged tourist experience in a city like Dubai, this process potentially transforms the tourist enclave itself into a biopolitical repository or 'artificial common' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 250). This common is comprised of those 'languages, knowledges, affects, codes, habits, and practices' (250) in which these individuals are immersed. Precisely because of their tenuous instability, such tourist enclaves exemplify a 'geography of intensities and thresholds' (257) that potentially enables otherwise elusive encounters with alterity – among, say, Sri Lankan construction workers in Dubai, the city's Filipina shop clerks, and visiting Yemini and Italian tourists. Even exploitative ground rent on Sheik Zayed Road, or extractive oil rent dispatched from Abu Dhabi to service Dubai's debt defaults, or the obtuse abstractions of finance

capital that nearly led to the city's demise in the 2009 financial crisis, may each carry 'spectres of the common' (Hardt and Negri 2009: 153-159). This potential inversion of precarity and dispossession becomes visible when the tourist enclave is understood as a *biopolitical heterotopia of crisis capitalism*.

## Post-Fordist Tourist Subjection

*It is enough to recall the admiration of Lenin and Gramsci for Taylorism and Fordism to be perplexed at this weakness of revolutionaries for what is most exploitative and dehumanizing in the working life of capitalism: but this is precisely what is meant by utopian here, namely that what is currently negative can also be imagined as positive in that immense changing of the valences which is the Utopian future.*

– Fredric Jameson (2009: 423)

This aspect of the discussion returns us to Löfgren's study of relations among tourist sites and subjects. As a biopolitical enclosure, characterized by juridical exceptionalism, neoliberal political economy, and affective enticements, the tourist utopia may be understood, to borrow one more useful concept from Foucault, as an apparatus or *dispositif* of post-Fordist subjection. This apparatus produces a subject who is distinct from those tourists of industrial society. One crucial difference involves the post-Fordist displacement of material production by immaterial consumption as a mode of accumulation. This is accompanied by the concomitant transmutation of the temporality of the 9-to-5 work day (which, thanks to organized labor allowed the 'eight hours for what they will' necessary to drive a leisure industry) into a 24/7 'always-on' capitalism in which 'leisure time' is increasingly diffuse (Crary 2013). Thus, the relationship between the tourist enclave and its corresponding subject effectively severs the connection between the ascetic Calvinist work ethic and the spirit of economic productivity which served, from Marx to Weber to Keynes, as a mainstay of the mythology of industrial capitalism; the tourist utopia revels instead in the promise of capital accumulation based on nothing but play.

In an era with 'no outside', in which capitalism has colonized every facet of experience, cognition, and affect, and everyday life has taken the form of a generalized 'social factory', neither the traditional factory floor nor Castells' spaces of 'collective consumption' serve as the locus of political action. As a 'spatial exception' and 'interiorized outside', the tourist utopia is located precisely at ground zero of the 'neutral' contradiction of our own era. It is simultaneously a diversion from the dispossessions of post-Fordist

capitalism and a spectacular intensification of those very tendencies. In the prescient words of the *Situationist Internationale* – in a discourse that anticipated our current regime but with which we are only now coming to terms – the tourist utopia demonstrates that ‘leisure is the true revolutionary problem’ in contemporary capitalism.<sup>5</sup>

## Tourist Utopology

*The space of leisure [...] is the very epitome of contradictory space. This is where the existing mode of production produces both its worst and its best – parasitic outgrowths on the one hand, and exuberant new branches on the other – as prodigal of monstrosities as of promises (that it cannot keep).*

– Henri Lefebvre (1984: 385)

Given the preceding discussion, and in anticipation of the chapters that follow, we can now sketch a preliminary description of the *tourist utopia*. Following the instructive examples of Foucault’s ‘heterotopology’ and Jameson’s ‘utopology’,<sup>6</sup> we might conceive of this compendium of spatial characteristics as something approaching a tentative and incomplete *tourist utopology* (see Simpson 2016).

*The tourist utopia is an extra-territorial ‘space of exception’, with an ambiguous sovereignty which may be disaggregated, ‘graduated’ (Ong 2006), ‘bifurcated’ or ‘commodified’ (Palan 2003).*

*The tourist utopia is an enclave site of enclosure from everyday life, marked by ‘an edge where it meets another condition’ (Koolhaas 1998a).*

*These localized ‘spatial products’ (Easterling 2005) are financed largely by transnational capital, and favor the neoliberal dogma of deregulation and privatization.*

*The entrepreneurial partnerships that produce these sites create forms of shared governance, where the state cooperates with non-state actors, in both licit and illicit relationships, for mutual benefit.*

5 ‘Une idée neuve en Europe’, Situationist statement published in *Potlatch*, 1954; quoted in De Cauter (2005: 57).

6 See also De Cauter’s (2005) ‘theory of capsular society’.



*Such spaces are populated by transient workers and nomadic tourists who have no real local stake, and who therefore unwittingly create a palpable atmosphere of impermanence and temporariness.*

*These mobile individuals visit superlative attractions, iconic architecture, and themed environments, each of which are designed, narrated, and scripted to produce 'experiences'.*

*These attractions deploy a grammar of architectural features which reproduce the capital relation in the built environment, and create the infrastructure for a post-civil society.*

*Each locale possesses an 'economy of fascination' (Schmid 2009) which depends on immaterial, affective, and cognitive forms of labor and consumption, focused on such activities as shopping, dining, gambling, sightseeing, relaxation, and amusement, which in turn may contribute to a biopolitical common.*

*Finally, as a site of utopic spatial play, the tourist utopia is characterized by much the same paradox that Marin identified in More's text: 'It is an ideological critique of ideology'; this is true not only because the tourist site obscures the conditions of its own production, but because it assembles in exaggerated form all of the above regressive tendencies of late capitalism, in order to materialize a tourist imaginary that is driven by the desire to escape these very conditions in a moment of leisure diversion.*

## This Volume

*'Then let me implore you, my dear Raphael,' said I, 'to describe that island to us. Do not try to be brief, but explain in order everything relating to their land, their rivers, towns, people, manners, institutions, laws – everything, in short, that you think we would like to know. And you can take for granted that we want to know everything we don't know yet.'*

– Thomas More (1992: 30)

The pretext of *Utopia* is a lengthy conversation between More and one Raphael Hythloday (whose surname means something like 'peddler of nonsense'), an itinerant Portuguese philosopher who has purportedly traveled the world with Amerigo Vespucci and who offers detailed observations of the place he considers to be the Best State of the Commonwealth, the island of Utopia.



In the following brief chapter (which closes this prolegomenon and serves as a prologue to the remainder of the volume), Keller Easterling lays the groundwork for the study of tourist utopias by similarly narrating her own extensive travels to an astonishing array of economic free zones, from Dubai to the DPRK. While not quite achieving the status of Best States of the Commonwealth, these zones are exemplary of the globe's most rakish *extra-state* spaces. For Easterling, however, the free zone is less a place than a sort of spatial software that facilitates contagious experiments in urban design. For our purposes, these curious geopolitical experiments exemplify contemporary utopic spatial play. While certainly no 'Hythloday', Easterling offers insightful descriptions of these zone iterations, including (to paraphrase More) everything we might like to know about their geography, people, manners, institutions, and laws.

Easterling traces the free zone metamorphosis, from early-twentieth-century entrepôt warehouses, to third world United Nations-inspired export facilities, to the total urbanism of ersatz Asian city-states like Shenzhen. These mutating heterotopias of crisis capitalism clearly serve as a model or inspiration for the exceptional leisure spaces explored in the chapters that follow. By opportunistically mingling state and non-state aspirations, free zones often merge the sober protocols of economic development with whimsical leisure fantasies, in the process smuggling into mundane global infrastructure bits of renegade spatial code that animate the utopic imaginary.

The next section of the book, *Enclaves*, demonstrates different ways in which that spatial code enables production of utopic urban enclaves. In chapter three, Pál Nyíri explores 'instant city' enclave gambling environments recently constructed in the jungles of Laos. These Southeast Asian exemplars of Easterling's free zones are ostensibly paragons of modernity authored by expatriate Chinese developers. These Laotian casinos serve predominantly Chinese travelers who venture to the Boten and Golden Triangle Special Economic Zones for gambling, sex tourism, wild game dining, and other holiday fantasies. Nyíri's focus on these sites inadvertently reveals the genesis of places like Macau, Singapore, and Abu Dhabi, which are explored in the following three chapters – once obscure parochial enclaves of juridical exceptionalism which have successfully pursued global city ambitions.

In chapter four I analyze the semi-autonomous Chinese 'Special Administrative Region' of Macau, and chart the tiny enclave's remarkable recent transformation from Portuguese colonial backwater to global casino gaming paradise. Drawing on Sloterdijk's philosophical account of globalization, I trace Macau's crucial role in the globalization process, and the convergence in the city today of two antithetical modern utopian schemes which were

inaugurated by Portuguese explorers half a millennium ago. I argue that the *globalized* proto-capitalist Iberian navigations and discoveries, on one hand, and *interiorized* Chinese revolutionary state socialism, on the other, are two complementary utopic projects which coalesce today in Macau's phantasmagoric post-colonial and post-socialist cityscape.

Since its independence from Malaysia, Singapore has pursued global city ambitions, and in chapter five Daniel Goh discusses the manner in which the spatial production of a global Singapore constitutes a literal instance of what Zygmunt Bauman has called 'liquid modernity'. Goh pursues this argument by focusing on the city's dynamic Singapore Bay waterfront development strategy, and the manner in which this 'utopia by the bay' is the materialization of a capitalist dream form. This specter not only attracts international tourists to the bay area's lush indoor botanical gardens, iconic integrated casino resort, and Chingay cultural parades, but also symbolically sublimates the state's endemic national anxieties about its global city status into the cascading Asian economic wave.

In chapter six, Yasser Elsheshtawy explores the development of a cultural tourist enclave on Saadiyat Island, or the 'Island of Happiness', in the emirate of Abu Dhabi; this development strategy is increasingly common across Doha, Muscat, and a variety of other Arabian locales. Elsheshtawy follows the influences of the so-called 'Guggenheim effect', as the emirate seeks to increase domestic tourism and enhance a more general Arabian urban imaginary with construction of both a Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim art museum and an incarnation of the Louvre dedicated to celebrating the life of Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Zayed. The resulting development is exemplary of the 'starchitect'-designed 'autistic architecture' described by Kaika (2011), and is consistent with emergent 'post-civil' forms of public life in the emirate.

The chapters in the next section, Imaginaries, focus in different ways on the mediated production of utopic tourist spaces. In chapter seven, Angela Ndalianis addresses Walt Disney's dream to design his own zone iteration, the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow (EPCOT), a utopian city of the future that he hoped would be a novel articulation of science, technology, and entrepreneurialism. Ndalianis demonstrates that the motifs of the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century world's fairs and expositions animated Disney's imagination and his subsequent theme park design. Disney, in turn, inspired construction of futuristic and innovative enclave techno-parks, such as the reclaimed island of Obaida in Tokyo Bay, and Futurescape in Poitiers, France (not to mention Disney's influence on each of the other tourist locales analyzed in this volume). Each of these proto-urban utopic projects attempts to realize Disney's EPCOT

vision to create a kind of urban laboratory, or learning city, which might function to educate visitors about the role of technological innovations in knowledge-based societies.

In chapter eight, Benjamin Hodges studies video game production in Bulgaria during the country's tumultuous transition from socialism to capitalism. Since the Byzantine era Bulgaria has served as the crossroads for migrants between Europe and Asia. Today, Bulgaria is also an unlikely but important site of software and game design for the global gaming industry, and these games often deploy locales from Bulgaria's crumbling cities and pristine beaches as settings for virtual action. The games become destinations for young Bulgarian 'post-tourist' gamers who hope to escape the economic conditions of crisis capitalism at home by touring pristine desert islands with perfectly rendered polygonal palm trees, or post-apocalyptic urban spaces modeled after the post-socialist (i.e., post-utopian) metropolis. Indeed, with its open-ended imagistic possibilities, the virtual world is perhaps the ideal arena for utopic spatial play. Violence and criminality both within and outside the games perfectly channel the affect that emanates from the country's post-Soviet market transition.

While many of the tourist sites explored in this book are simulated post-Fordist locales, the undeveloped and sublimely natural Aotearoa (the Maori name for New Zealand) – the site used to depict Tolkien's Middle-earth in Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, may be better understood as 'pre-Fordist'. However, Margaret Werry contends, in chapter nine, that throughout the twentieth century New Zealand has utilized such heterotopic tourist enclaves in technologies of liberal and neoliberal governance. With the filming of *The Hobbit*, which is the focus of her chapter, director Peter Jackson emerged as putative 'non-state' sovereign, exercising considerable influence over New Zealand's legislature and labor laws to facilitate film production, and serving as the personification of the broader public-private entanglements of transnational media corporations and national governance under the neoliberal regime. Tourist and cinematic spaces converged in the process. From Werry's perspective, Jackson's use of innovative film technologies not only constructs an idealized image of Middle-earth, sanitized of indigenous colonial and cultural politics, but also conspires to remake the film viewer into the sort of mobile and flexible subject idealized in fantasies of post-Fordist production. The entire population of New Zealand was thus mobilized in a utopic project of biopolitical tourist subjection.

Adam Lampton's Macau photo essay closes this section in a unique manner. Lampton provides an extended visual analysis of the built environment of a utopian tourist site, exemplifying many of the theoretical concepts

discussed in the other chapters. Lampton's photographs aptly depict the quirky poetics of spectacular excess common to such locales.

In the final section of the book, Archipelagoes, Veronica della Dora concludes the volume with an imaginative meditation on the utopic articulations that reverberate among contemporary archipelagoes around the globe, specifically focusing on fabricated islands reclaimed off the coast of Dubai for the purposes of real estate speculation, and the ancient monastic Orthodox Greek enclave of Mount Athos. As the probable inspiration for More's *Utopia*, Mount Athos is an apt locale for reflecting on the contemporary utopic tourist imaginary. Taken together, the natural environment of Mount Athos and Dubai's artificial offshore archipelagoes (Petti 2008) ironically illustrate both the nostalgia about, and contemporary desire for, a pristine and authentic geographical 'outside' to the spectacular and commodified excesses of unbridled capitalism.

These tourist utopias are leisure sites of utopic spatial play and imagination. As such, they function as social laboratories for experiments with juridical or governmental innovations; illustrate diverse forms of opportunistic extra-territorial and extra-state cooperation; serve as temporary home to transient, multinational populations; and feature architectural and design mutations, each fashioned to produce intensified and spectacular forms of relaxation and recreation. Of course, none of these sites constitute More's ever-elusive Utopia; but they are enclaves of utopic spatial play and forms of tourist desire and affect where the tourist imaginary takes a concrete, material form. Taken together, these chapters chart an emergent geographical, political, and social terrain specifically designed to facilitate the explorations of an increasingly mobile population of travelers from Asia and elsewhere, and to devise new modes of escape and leisure accumulation.

## Coda: Project Immersion

*Specialized tourist researchers often feel the need to legitimate their seemingly frivolous topic by pointing out its economic and social importance, but surely tourism is too important a topic to confine within the boundaries of 'tourism research'.*

– Orvar Löfgren (1999: 6-7)

The contributors to this book represent a wide variety of academic disciplines, including anthropology, architecture, communication, cultural

studies, geography, performance studies, photography, and sociology. As such, the authors bring a diverse array of methodological approaches and scholarly predispositions to the common problematic of exceptional tourist locales.

Most of the chapters that follow began as papers prepared for a workshop that was held at the Adelson Advanced Education Center, an off-campus facility that Sheldon Adelson gifted to the University of Macau, and which is located within the labyrinthine retail 'experience' on offer in his gigantic Venetian Macau resort. The workshop site is a metonym of the tourist utopias that are the focus of the book (see Simpson, chapter four in this volume). As the world's seventh-largest building, the Venetian is perhaps the largest themed environment on the planet. The structure has meticulously rendered architectural and design motifs that simulate the renaissance city of Venice, indoor canals plied by Puccini-singing Filipino gondoliers, and a realistic azure blue painted sky with billowing white clouds that float tantalizingly above Chanel, Tiffany, and Jaquet-Droz shops (see Figure 1.1). Period-costumed magicians, jugglers, opera singers, and yes, pirates, contribute to the Venetian's interiorized and branded urban 'streetmospherics'.

The Venetian- and other European-themed sites in Macau are regular stops on the itinerary of what has become a sort of Grand Tour for millions

**Figure 1.1 Faux Venice cityscape and indoor canal at the Venetian Macau resort**



Adam Lampton, used by permission

of post-socialist Chinese tourists, who travel to Macau with special visas the central government grants to select affluent citizens. These newly bourgeois travelers, like those earlier Europeans in Löfgren's study, are working out in real time what it means to be a tourist in the twenty-first century.

In an effort to ensure total immersion in this tourism spectacle, workshop participants not only traversed the world's largest casino, but also walked the length of the elevated pedestrian causeway that connects the Venetian with the Sands-Cotai, its sister resort across the street (and itself the world's eighth-largest building), where we visited Himalayan caves, computerized waterfalls, and an interior Chinese Confucian garden. Taken together, these interconnected structures comprise what may be the world's largest continuous interior space, and the perfection of the biopolitical tourist enclosure (Simpson 2014). We also marveled at the Wynn Resort's pyrotechnic dancing water fountains; dined in a private restaurant normally reserved for high-rolling VIP gamblers in the MGM property; chatted with executives from a company that arranges casino junkets for high-stakes gamblers; toured the 'world's largest elevated wave pool' at the Galaxy resort; and even relaxed in leather recliners in one of the Galaxy's private cinemas. Hopefully, these efforts to peek inside the utopic world of 'elite mobilities' (Birtchnell and Caletrio 2014) have productively informed the chapters that follow.

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